



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF SEDONA-VERDE VALLEY

The VoteR

League of Women Voters of Sedona-Verde Valley

www.lwvsedona-verdevalley.org

P. O. Box 966 Sedona, AZ 86339

February 2012 *Arizona-100 years of Statehood*

**DON'T MISS: O'Connor House Civic Engagement Campaign
Clarkdale, Jerome, Sedona - Vote on March 13
Candidate Forum, Sedona Fire District - March 28
Membership Meeting- LWVUS Privatization Consensus - April 11**



President's Message

Growing with our Time

At our January Board meeting, a name change for our local League was presented – the recommended new name: The League of Women Voters of the Greater Verde Valley. The reasoning: Many of our towns and unincorporated communities, have grown in population and activity. Our new Districts - County, Legislative and Congressional have altered that which we thought might last forever. Or has it?

As the Verde Valley we now have the incredible opportunity to spread our story and our history, to continue to influence life and action in our expanded region.

To better describe the Verde Valley, I am proposing a name change:

NOW: the League of Women Voters of Sedona-Verde Valley

NEW: the League of Women Voters of the Greater Verde Valley.

This will be discussed and voted on by the membership at our Annual Meeting, May 5, 2012.

Local League Partners with O'Connor House to Reach Voters

The League of Women Voters of Sedona-Verde Valley has been chosen as a Sector Partner for the O'Connor House Centennial Voter Engagement Project and its goal to move Arizona to the "top states" in informed voter participation. ***The Arizona We Want*** and the ***AZ Civic Health Index*** report that we currently rank in the "bottom 10" of every aspect of voter participation.

Our League board met with Project Chair Elva Coor last September and committed to the Centennial Voter Engagement Project state-wide campaign which is just now kicking off. We will launch an Informed Voter Participation Project targeting independent/non-partisan voters with specific programs to get out the vote in the Verde Valley, especially for the primaries. Efforts include candidate forums, voter information and registration stations, ballot issue forums, a ***Voter Guide*** on state ballot measures, an update of the League's ***Political Directory***, a mini-guide targeting Independent Voters, and other activities to reach the highest level of eligible voter participation possible for the Verde Valley.

According to Ellie Bauer, League president. "We are always concerned about voter participation and strive to do everything possible to expand citizen involvement in government. We are thrilled to be working with the O'Connor House on this state-wide project."

(Information from LWVSVV Press Release by Barbara Litrell)

Anniversary Luncheon Celebrates League of Women Voters and Arizona Centennial

Attendance was great at our annual luncheon and fundraiser, including Coconino District 3 Supervisor Matt Ryan, Camp Verde Council members Buck Buchanan, Bruce George, and Robin Whatley; and Sedona City Council member (and League member) Barbara Litrell. Mr. L.G. Mace, past president of the Yavapai County Republican party, drove over from Prescott to challenge the speakers and the initiative. We made some money on the raffle and enjoyed stimulating conversation and excellent speakers.

Yavapai County Recorder Leslie Hoffman led off with an explanation of the new county Voting Centers, which replace the precinct polling places of the past. Registered voters of Yavapai County will be able to vote at any of these centers, regardless of where they live in the County. She explained the savings to the County and convenience to voters that these centers will bring. Yavapai County is

one of the first in the state to implement Voting Centers. Ms. Hoffman also noted that 53% of Yavapai County voters are using Permanent Early Voting (mail-in) ballots.



Yavapai County Recorder Leslie Hoffman Spoke about Changes to Election Process

Our main speaker was former Phoenix Mayor Paul Johnson, who is leading an effort to change Arizona's primary election system through an initiative that is currently in the petition stage for the fall election. This initiative would open primary elections (except the Presidential Preference Primary) to more contenders on the ballot and allow all voters to vote for any candidate, regardless of party affiliation. It would be a big change and would require at least two amendments to the Arizona Constitution. Accompanying Mayor Johnson was legal advisor Karen Schroeder and petition campaign coordinator Joe Yuhas. The presentation concluded with a lively Q&A session. (The League has taken no position for or against this initiative, which, since it is a statewide issue, will be considered by the League of Women Voters of Arizona.)



Paul Johnson and Karen Schroeder Explain Arizona's Open Primary Initiative

Membership Meeting on Privatization of Government Services

The nationwide League Privatization Study is drawing to a close and on April 11 our league will hold a membership meeting to discuss questions concerning this contentious issue and attempt to reach a consensus on them. A number of members have been reading the study materials for the past few months and will be prepared to lead the discussion. All members are encouraged to attend, even if only to observe the consensus process. This is the way that the League of Women Voters decides on whether and how to endorse particular legislation and government policies. Privatization is an important public policy trend and one that affects us at the local level as well as in the State and National arenas.

The meeting will take place on the afternoon of Wednesday, April 11th, at the Mystic Hills Clubhouse, 108 E. Mallard Drive – just east of SR179A near Poco Diablo. Contact Kathy Heidepriem for directions or Robyn Prud'homme-Bauer if you have questions on the subject or the process.

Candidate Forums for Elections in Sedona, Clarkdale, and Jerome

The League of Women Voters of Sedona-Verde Valley sponsored primary election forums with the Mayoral and Council candidates running for the Sedona City and Clarkdale and Jerome Town Councils.

Appearing at the February 16 Sedona forum were Council candidates Mark Dinunzio, John Martinez, John D. Miller, Jessica Williamson, and Mayoral candidate Rob Adams. Council seats are for a four year term and the Mayoral seat is for a two year term. The Mayor is running unopposed.

Each candidate made an opening presentation and then responded to a question about the three most important issues facing Sedona today. They were also asked to comment on Proposition 420, proposing an extension of the Alternative Expenditure Limitation. Also referred to as "Home Rule," the alternative expenditure limitation allows the City to set its budget locally rather than adhering to a state-imposed budget limitation. Sedona currently operates under home rule, but it is necessary that it be placed on the ballot every 4 years for voter consideration.

The foremost issues mentioned by the Sedona City Council candidates were fiscal responsibility; proper management of public safety, health, and welfare; wastewater treatment, stormwater controls, and other infrastructure; traffic road congestion; oversight of growth; and long term community planning.

Appearing at the February 22 Clarkdale forum were Council candidates Richard Dehnert and Anita Simgen, and Mayoral candidate Doug Von Gausig. Council candidate Pat Williams was unable to attend. Council seats are for a four year term and the Mayoral seat is for a two year term.

There was a brief presentation on the Clarkdale General Plan Update which is on the March 13, 2012 ballot. The General Plan may be viewed on the Town's website at www.clarkdale.az.gov. Copies of the Plan are also available for review at Town Hall and at the Clark Memorial Library.

The candidates made brief presentations on their qualifications and answered an advance question on the three most important issues that the Clarkdale Town Council needs to address. They then responded to questions from the audience. Much of the discussion reflected a general agreement among the candidates on the importance of water and economic development, while maintaining its present character



JEROME TOWN COUNCIL CANDIDATES shared viewpoints and ideas at a public forum Tuesday evening February 28, hosted by the Jerome Chamber of Commerce and moderated by the League of Women Voters of Sedona-Verde Valley. From left to right, Anne Bassett, Nikki Check, Lew Currier, Randall Hunt and Bill Phinney introduced themselves, cited key issues facing the town, and responded to a variety of audience questions relating to water supply, parking, infrastructure problems, annexation possibilities, affordable housing needs, community character, tourism and financial management. Four incumbents (two elected and two appointed), and newcomer Randall Hunt, are vying for the five-member council. If the Town follows tradition, the two highest vote getters at the March 13 election will become Mayor and Vice Mayor. (Information from an LWVSVV Press Release by Judy Miller.)

The Primary Election is a vote by mail election. Early voting began Thursday, February 16, 2012 and ballots must be received by 7:00 p.m. on Election Day, March 13, 2012.

Any candidate who receives a majority of the votes cast at the Primary Election will be declared elected without running at the General Election. If not all of the seats are filled, a minimum of two candidates per unfilled office will be placed on the General Election Ballot taken from the candidates receiving the highest votes. If necessary, the General Election will be held on May 15, 2012.

[Sedona Fire District Recall Election](#)

A candidate forum for the Sedona Fire Department recall election is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, March 27 at 6:30 p.m. at the Jewish Community Center in Sedona. It will be co-sponsored by the LWVSVV and the Sedona Chamber of Commerce. Three SFD board members are subject to recall and there are three challengers. Since it is a recall election it will be treated as three individual races. As a result, the forum will proceed only if all incumbents and recall candidates appear.

Voter Service Training

Voter Service co-chair Mary Gassaway is putting together a moderator training session for League members who are interested in volunteering to work at candidate forums. Harriette Burkhalter, a long-time League member and skilled moderator, has agreed to lead a session in late March for early April. Location and details to be announced.

March Meeting of the Board of Directors -The next meeting of the LWVSVV Board of Directors will take place on Thursday, March 15th, from 1:00-3:00 p.m. at the Oak Creek Valley Clubhouse. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend. (Call Judy Miller for directions.)

What Issues Should We Focus on in 2012-2013?

League Program, a three-part process, is a core component of the League's mission. It is composed of the identification of issues that we study then we discuss through consensus, and finally determine how we will advocate on the issue. As said above, program begins with the identification of issues that are important and timely to our community and of interest to our members. So we need your thoughts on what regional issues should we focus on in 2012-2013. Is there a regional issue that the League should take on? If so, what should we do – study it, create a community dialogue on it, or advocate for it. Email your thoughts on what issues we should focus on for the next year by March 10 to Robyn Prud'homme-Bauer .

League of Women Voters of Arizona

As the Arizona Legislature begins its session - LWVAZ legislative program gets underway. Legislation we will be following on and make comments on include redistricting, clean elections, education, independent judiciary, creation of a lieutenant governor position, and term limits to name a few. From time to time LWVAZ will send out an action alert on a bill that we need to have League members comment on – when you get an action alert – take a moment and respond to your legislator or governor. Remember your voice is important in the debate of issues being discussed by our elected representatives.

National League Names 2012 Legislative Priorities

The LWVUS has identified Voter Protection, Campaign Finance Reform, Environmental Defense and Health Care Defense as priority issues for this year. In addition, the following items are now on the LWVUS "Watch List" for 2012: Fair Taxation, CEDAW (Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women), Support for the United Nations, and Immigration. Items on the Watch List will be acted upon if the opportunity arises for League action. The LWVUS Board selected these issues based on what is likely to come before the 112th Congress, the opportunities to make an impact, program decisions made by members at the last Convention, member interest, and resources available to manage these priorities effectively. The Board reviews these priorities throughout the year, making changes if necessary.

Board Members 2011-2012

Ellie Bauer, Clarkdale
Chairperson, LWVAZ Rep

Judy Miller, Cornville
Secretary

Liz Danbury, Sedona
Treasurer

Donna Pratt, Sedona
Membership

Robyn Prud'homme- Bauer, Clarkdale
LWVAZ Vice President

Kathy Heidepriem, Sedona
Newsletter and Website

Ruth Kiessel, Cottonwood
Voter Service

Rita Livingston, Sedona

LWVSVV CALENDAR	2011-2012
Date	Event
March 13 th , Tuesday	Municipal Elections in Clarkdale, Jerome, and Sedona
March 15 th , Thursday 1:00-3:00pm	LWVSVV Board Meeting Oak Creek Valley Clubhouse
March 27 th , Tuesday	Candidate Forum, Sedona Fire District
April 11 th , Wednesday, 2:00-4:00pm This is a membership meeting; all LWVSVV members should attend participate in or to observe the consensus process	Consensus meeting on LWVUS Study of Privatization of Government Mystic Hills Clubhouse, 108 E. Mallard in Sedona (Call Kathy Heidepriem for directions)
May 5 th , Saturday 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. (Tentative)	Annual business meeting and elections, speaker and a meal Las Carretas Restaurant, Clarkdale (Tentative)
May 15 th , Tuesday	General Elections in Clarkdale, Jerome, and Sedona
May 19 th -20 th , Saturday and Sunday Phoenix	LWVAZ State Council
June 9 th -12 th , Saturday – Tuesday Washington, DC	LWVUS Convention

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.